

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A polymer wherein at least 80% of the monomer repeat units comprise

- a) an ion-conducting region ~~having consisting of~~ an aromatic backbone of at least one aromatic group, wherein at least one pendant ion-conducting functional group is attached to each aromatic group ~~in the aromatic backbone~~; and
- b) a spacer region ~~having consisting of~~ an aromatic backbone of at least four aromatic groups, wherein no ion-conducting functional groups are attached to the aromatic backbone;

~~such that at least 80% of the polymer chain contains alternate ion-conducting and spacer regions along the length of the chain.~~

2. (Currently Amended) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein at least 95% of the monomer repeat units comprise the ion-conducting region and the spacer region.

3. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least one aromatic group in the ion-conducting region is selected from the group consisting of phenylene, naphthylene and anthracenylene groups.

4. (Currently Amended) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein each aromatic group ~~is in~~ the aromatic backbone of the ion-conducting region is adjacent to an electron-donating group.

5. (Original) A polymer according to claim 4, wherein the electron-donating group is an ether group.

6. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least one ion-conducting functional group is a sulphonic acid group.

7. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein the ratio of the number of aromatic groups in the spacer region to the number of aromatic groups in the ion-conducting region is at least 2:1.

8. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least four aromatic groups in the spacer region are selected from the group consisting of phenylene, naphtylene and anthracenylene groups.
9. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least four aromatic groups in the spacer region are connected by electron withdrawing groups.
10. (Original) A polymer according to claim 9, wherein the electron-withdrawing groups are sulphone or ketone groups.
11. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, which has an equivalent weight of less than 800gmol⁻¹.
12. (Previously Presented) A polymer according to claim 1, which has an inherent viscosity of greater than 1.0dl/g.
13. (Previously Presented) A polymer solution comprising a polymer according to claim 1.
14. (Previously Presented) A polymer electrolyte membrane comprising a polymer according to claim 1.
15. (Previously Presented) An electrocatalyst layer on a substrate wherein the electrocatalyst layer comprises a polymer according to claim 1.
16. (Previously Presented) A membrane electrode assembly comprising one or both of a polymer electrolyte membrane and an electrocatalyst layer on a substrate, wherein the polymer electrolyte membrane and the electrocatalyst layer comprise a polymer according to claim 1.